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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this department. All communications must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer to ensure publication.

A SUGGESTION

Dear Editor: I wish each state association would ask every subscriber to get two new subscriptions before January first. This would make a good showing and might be asked as a memorial to Miss Palmer.

Illinois

H. F.

PUBLIC HEALTH VERSUS PRIVATE DUTY

Dear Editor: I am a young graduate of one of our respectable Brooklyn hospitals. Before I graduated my classmates and I often used to discuss our future work. Not for one minute did we agree upon doing any other work but community work, so that we might serve many instead of giving our time and service to one individual. Many a dull minute was relieved by the bright thought of being useful and doing the work we love dearly for the benefit of those who need us most; namely, the poor, but when we stopped dreaming and came down to earth by coming in actual contact with life, we noticed after leaving the hospital that life is not as simple as it is in the hospital. When one notices the importance of three meals a day, a room to live in, and clothes, one can readily see that twenty-five dollars a week is an inadequate sum to live on. Therefore, I would like to have Dr. Pfeiffer explain how he can consider us as profiteers when we demand of society only enough to live on. Judging from what I could learn from my sister workers, none of them are anxious to do private duty. We would rather do what is best for the majority; namely, district, social, or visiting nursing. In return for this we want a decent wage. I do not have to describe the danger of contracting disease which the nurse must encounter. In case of illness, who would care for her? I hope that my letter will not pass unnoticed by those who do not try to learn more about the nurses' economic conditions.

New York

S. M.

THE STATUS OF THE NURSE

Dear Editor: Does the public want gentlewomen in the nursing profession? Whose fault is it that a nurse is treated as an upper domestic in many New York homes? Ten years ago I would have laughed at the idea of any patient expecting me to partake of the food served to her domestics, or to have my meals served at a different hour from that for the members of the family. Now in some homes any other arrangement is apparently not to be considered. It is true that one will sometimes arrive on a case to find the other nurse on duty far from cultured, to find grammatical errors on her charts, and that she is obviously a woman who would feel much more comfortable socially with the servants than with the family, but why should the gentlewoman, because she has embraced the same profession, be placed automatically in the same class, be treated by the servants as though she were one of them, and, in short, be made perfectly miserable? The life on the case is the nurse's only life for the moment. Twelve long hours out of the twenty-four she is in that atmosphere, an intolerable atmosphere to a sensitive woman. Are the women of good breeding to step aside and let private nursing